A WEEK IN VENICE

A FILM-TEXT

Bernard Sharratt

A WEEK IN VENICE

NCQ TITLES

Legal Fictions
Politics & Letters
On Yeats: Upon a House
Drama & Democracy
Locating Theology
Time Pieces
Critical Paranoia
On Joyce: 3 easy essays
On Eliot
Literary Conversions

Film-texts

A Trip to Rome
A Short Break in Budapest
Magic in Prague
A Week in Venice
Four Days in Athens
The Last Priest of Horus
WWW: the weekend that warped the world

Play-texts

Darwin: an evolutionary entertainment
Strange Meetings & Shorts

Eliotics

Forthcoming

Rubbishing Hockney & other reviews
On Collecting Walter Benjamin
Autobiography & Class Consciousness
Considering Canterbury Cathedral

Though each can be read independently,
these NCQ publications, taken together,
comprise a single hyper-text collection.

A WEEK IN VENICE

a film-text

Bernard Sharratt

New Crisis Quarterly
2015

NEW CRISIS QUARTERLY

ncq@newcrisisquarterly.myzen.co.uk

First published 2015

ISBN : 978-1-910956-14-4

For
Marion, Nicola, & Paul
with love and thanks for
my 70th birthday
in Venice

© Bernard Sharratt 2015

This film-text is not written with actual film production in mind. Though it plays with a variety of film genres, it is primarily intended to be read—and imagined.

Venice is an appropriate place as the setting for my characters and my themes, and the script is designed to be easily supplemented by on-line images and maps of the specified sites and scenes. Other film-texts in this 'city' series are set in Athens, Prague, Rome, and Budapest, and the series will probably conclude with *A Last Sight of Europe*.

A film-text is a particularly suitable form for the New Crisis Quarterly imprint, since that name revives the title of a very short-lived periodical whose first, only, and final issue appeared in 1984, under the guise of my *The Literary Labyrinth*. Its editorial programme was to publish reviews of imagined books I didn't feel I had the time actually to write, so its readers were cheerfully invited, if so inclined, to write those works themselves. In the same spirit, reading a film-text means that most of the work of imagining the film can be done by you, which is part of the fun of writing them.

B.S.
2015

FADE IN [TITLE OVER:]

View from aircraft circling over and flying into Venice Airport in glorious sunset, rapidly fading into darkness as the aircraft lands.

WRITTEN:] Day One: Tuesday

1. INT. VENICE AIRPORT ARRIVALS.

DAVE and KATE are next to each other in a queue shuffling towards immigration control.
It is 9.30 pm. Everybody looks tired and fed up.

Dave is perhaps mid-thirties, probably a businessman. Kate is late twenties, attractive, but not easy to categorise. They don't know each other.

PA ANNOUNCEMENT

British Airways once again apologises for the long delay in the arrival of Flight 8566, due to the on-board illness of a passenger and the emergency diversion to Geneva. We sincerely hope that you have not been too severely inconvenienced and that you will fly with us again.

DAVE

(mutters) Maybe. Not. *(turns to Kate)* 'Not too severely inconvenienced', indeed—only the worst airport in Europe at which to arrive this late.

KATE
(hesitates to respond, then:) How so?

DAVE
Getting a vaporetto, at this hour — it's now the bus or a damned expensive water taxi — *(looks at watch)* though we might just make the last Alilaguna service—

KATE
I haven't a clue what you're talking about— I'm afraid it's my first visit to Venice.

DAVE
Sorry —er, David Hutton *(offers handshake, ignored)* —well, the problem is, it's now either a ride across the water, which is great — but the last regular service goes in *(checks watch)* 22 minutes—or a pretty grotty bus ride along the land route and over the bridge— and that's certainly not the way you want to see Venice for the first time. Where are you staying? Mestre? Or in Venice proper?

KATE
Er, it's near the Zattere *[Za-TER-re]* vaporetto station, according to my map at least —*(reluctantly offers her hand* —Kate— so what's this other service you mentioned?

DAVE
It's a private ferry line but reasonable cost— unlike the taxis—if you trust me, follow me close when we get through passport control— got any more luggage to collect? And can you run, or walk fast??

KATE
Just this bag—and I'll keep up. Don't worry.

DAVE
Right—you're on. I'll grab a trolley if I can. I'll get you there—and it's ZA-terre, by the way.

2. EXT. COVERED WALKWAY.

[CREDITS AND JAUNTY MUSIC OVER:]

Exuberant tracking shots of the long covered walk from the airport to the Alilaguna landing bay as Dave and Kate race along it, wildly pushing a trolley with their baggage, in what becomes a high spirited dash—They just make it in time to buy tickets and tumble aboard the last boat as it begins to leave the dock.

3. INT. BOAT.

From inside the boat only dark waters and far lights are visible. Both have sobered down. Kate is wary.

DAVE
Well, it's a shame you can't actually *see* much—it's a pretty spectacular ride—but do come back this way, especially at sunset.

No response from Kate, who looks through the dark windows at lights and reflections.

DAVE

(tries again) Better than a bus in any case! *(no response)* Unfortunately, this isn't the route that goes all the way round to Zattere, so let's work out the best way to get you there. What's the address you need to get to?

KATE

(hesitates, then:) The Hotel Calcina.

DAVE

Ah, Ruskin's old place. Good choice. OK, let's see. Simplest to get off at Fondamente Nuove—no, Sant' Alvise is better, and if we then walk through to Marcuola, I can drop my bag en route, and then take you on the N line to Accademia—right down the Grand Canal —which *is* a great way to see the place for the very first time, after all.

KATE

(just refraining from a complete put-down) Sounds like I'm taking you out of your way. Perhaps you'd better just show me on the map.

DAVE

Well, OK—maps out—but I really don't mind. I love that ride down the Grand Canal anyway. No trouble at all. And finding the Calcina might be a bit tricky for you—er, for anyone strange to the place, I mean.

KATE *(relents a little)*

Fine. You know Venice well?

DAVE
I come here every chance I get. I'm in insurance. And we have quite a few blue chip clients here, so—

KATE
Insurance. I see.
(She looks pointedly out of the window.)

4. EXT. CANNAREGIO STREETS.

They disembark. And walk through Cannaregio. Each pulling luggage on wheels.

DAVE
This is the old Ghetto area—Not the best time to *arrive* in Venice—most places have closed by now—but the best time to *walk* in Venice—after all the day-trippers have gone—enjoy the peace and quiet. Pity about the rattle of the wheels though!

5. EXT. AT DOOR OF HOTEL LEONARDO.

DAVE
Just hang on here a mo', Kate. I'll let them know I've finally got here, dump my bag. Only be a sec.

Kate waits, resisting the urge to tell him to sod off. Dave comes out to her.

DAVE
Right, I'll take your bag now if you like. We're heading for the Marcuola vaporetto station. Five minute walk —if you've got a

mobile better tell the Calcina you're finally on your way. Take us about thirty minutes. OK?

6. EXT. STREETS.

They walk across Rio Terra San Leonardo, towards the Marcuola ferry stage. As they turn a corner, they see a small fire against the wall of the closed public toilets. A couple of policemen and some firemen are putting out the flames. They are directed to go down another street to the vaporetto station.

DAVE
My word, we can't have *that* burn down. Irreplaceable! —there are only six public toilets in the whole of Venice!

Kate is not very amused.

7. EXT. ON A VAPORETTO. THE GRAND CANAL.

Dave tries to make conversation.
Kate is not responsive.

DAVE
Isn't it magnificent!

KATE
Marvellous.
(pause)
I think I just want to look at it, thank you.

8. EXT. MOONLIGHT. FONDAMENTO ZATTERE PONTO LUNGO.

DAVE
Look, are you sure I can't take you off to dinner or a bite somewhere. It's pretty hard to find a place to eat at this hour.

They are passing two fish restaurants which are clearly still open. Kate glances pointedly at them.

DAVE
They will have finished serving an hour ago. Believe me.

KATE
(Calls to a waiter clearing up. In confident Italian.)
Sei ancora servire? i pasti?
[Are you still serving food?]

WAITER
No, no, signorina. Last orders, hour ago.

DAVE
(modestly ironic cough) OK, just one tip about eating in Venice. It can be a drag, pretty expensive, and often not very good. What I do is just buy a baguette, some ham, cheese, whatever, and eat it wherever. At the far end of this, the Fondamenta Zattere, is a decent little supermarket, tucked away, but it's good —and the nicest place around here just to sit in the shade is the gardens of the Casa Rezz-onico. Best lunch in Venice. Well, sort of.

KATE
Thanks. I'll remember it.

9. EXT. OUTSIDE HOTEL CALCINA.

KATE
Thank you again—a great introduction to Venice. I'll be fine here.

DAVE *(hands her a card)*
There's my mobile number if I can be useful. *(hesitates)* Well, enjoy Venice! Ciao, Kate.

KATE
Goodbye, David.

10. EXT. FONDAMENTA ZATTERE.

Dave walks away. To himself:

DAVE
Worth a try. Ah well. Now to work.

As he walks he makes a call on his mobile. He now speaks in a quite different tone, sharp, business-like:

Fabrizio? It's David, yes. Sorry. Flight was delayed. Thought you might still be working, though. *(pause)* Yes. So, they took out all six? I was actually passing one, near Marcuola. So that's number two : 'servizio pubblico'—si? Well, we don't insure toilets —I think. Shall I leave it till tomorrow? See what you've got by then. *(pause)* OK, at ten. Your San Marco office. Yes. Oh, hang on.

Can you check something for me. Passenger on the 8566 flight, staying at Hotel Calcina. First name, Kate. Can you just check the lists and get her surname for me. *(pause)* Yes I know you really shouldn't. Just a favour. *(pause)* No, not work. Just, er, interested. Come on, Fabrizio, you know I could easily get it myself—you're just saving me a tiny bit of legwork. Come on, old friend. *(pause)* OK, tell me tomorrow if you can.

11. INT. HOTEL BEDROOM.

Kate is looking out from her balcony at the waters of the Guidecca Canal

KATE *(to herself)*
Right, let's get settled in.

Sheboots up her laptop and finds an internet connection.

That's fine. Security OK? Yup.

Pauses and ponders a moment. Then starts a rapid search. Commenting to herself:

Let's see if you might be useful after all, Mr David Hutton. Mmm, lots of David Huttons. *(several clicks)* Ah, that's the one. Mmmm. Lloyds of London. Well, well. Very interesting. You know, I might just take your bait. Lunch at Casa Rezzonico. But first—

WRITTEN:] Day Two: Wednesday

12. INT. LARGE OFFICE. MORNING.

A fairly dilapidated but once impressive room.
A working office. Computer. Desk. Chairs.
Large wall map of Venice.
Projector screen connected to computer.

FABRIZIO is about 45, a seasoned and senior detective in the Venice police.

On the large wall-screen is projected a scan of a letter. Dave and Fabrizio are standing, looking at it. The letter, computer printed, is as follows:

Bersagli
1. avviso
2. servizio pubblica
3. sotto gli archi
4. potenza lascia
5. più bella illusione ottica
6. 1911
7. incensato —

è necessario rispondere alle nostre esigenze o si perde ciò che di valore più
Matteo 14:28 Luca 23:37
Giovanni 1:25 Genesi 13:9

They sit contemplating it for a while.

DAVE
Well, I'm not much wiser, now I've actually seen it. At least we know what the first two targets are, but still no demands yet, I take it.

FABRIZIO
But you can see why I alerted you, David.

DAVE
Absolutely. Let's see the footage again. I saw the clips on YouTube, but it's difficult to make out details.

FABRIZIO
The fire service only got there after they'd started to burn. So here's the best we can compile at present.

Projected onto the wall-screen are a few moments of silent video footage, edited in segments, with variations of the same scene, which show several huge commercial advertisements on the frontage of buildings in the St Mark's area, first beginning to burn, then being rapidly extinguished.

DAVE
Well, you were dead right to call me. I checked. We do insure those advertising hoardings, but only as part of the overall buildings insurance. And the adverts themselves are obviously peanuts compared with what it *might* have cost us if the buildings themselves had caught fire. But it's worrying. If it was negligence, we might not pay out, but that looks pretty deliberate.

FABRIZIO
Yes. We think it was acid thrown onto the fabric of the adverts. It would eat through and then start to burn. But that kind of fabric is

designed to burn itself out before the buildings are really threatened.

DAVE
How do you throw acid that high?

FABRIZIO
A fragile container shot from a catapult? Burst on impact? Perhaps.

DAVE
And now, after last night's toilet fires, well—are we just dealing with some crazy arsonist or what? Have you got anything else to go on?

FABRIZIO
Blank. But I'm pretty sure it's another ransom scam, as with the Botticelli two years ago. So I was hoping you might have some fresh ideas. If it is like that one, it'll be your firm paying out.

DAVE
Probably. Can I see that letter again?

It comes up on the wall screen.

DAVE
Whoever it is, they're obviously a bit different from the last lot,anyway. Got a sense of humour, even. The first —*avviso*—a warning—but it can also mean advert, *pubblicità*, yes?—and then those adverts go up in flames. And it promptly gets advertised itself on the internet—no self-respecting

tourist could resist putting footage of that little fire up on YouTube. Of course, nobody liked those grotesque adverts anyway, plastered all over the finest buildings in Venice. So it can be put down to just disgruntled Venetians making a point. And whoever did it has definitely made their point. Then *servizio pubblico*—which would normally mean civil service, or public utility, yes?—I don't think you would have reckoned on them setting fire to toilets! And next, assuming they're in order: *sotto gli archi*—underneath the arches—and think how many arches are there in Venice!

FABRIZIO

Well, it could mean one of the bridges across the Grand Canal—in which case we only have three to protect. But it could mean any one of over four hundred smaller bridges—and it may not even mean a bridge, but just an archway. So how do we guard against an arsonist attacking the arches in Venice, of all places?

DAVE

Well, what about the rest: *(reads aloud)*

4. potenza lascia
5. più bella illusione ottica
6. 1911
7. incensato —

È necessario rispondere alle nostre esigenze o si perde ciò che di valore più.

What the hell does *potenza lascia* mean — power lacks, power leaves? 1911 is the most

worrying, presumably a version of 9/11. But are there any twin towers in Venice?

FABRIZIO

A Venetian wouldn't have a problem with either of those questions. *Potenza lascia* is the first words of the old rule : *Potenza lascia il posto a vela regola*—power gives way to sail—a powered boat has to yield to a sailing boat. Everybody brought up in Venice knows that—and we have to enforce it, after all. But what it means here, I have no idea. As for 1911—well, there is *one* tower which dates to around 1911—

DAVE

Of course, the campanile, rebuilt after the 1902 collapse. Finished in 1911, 1912? Wow, that's a *big* target. Are they going to smash a plane into the campanile at St Mark's? We do *not* insure that, I hope.

FABRIZIO

Lloyd's does, actually.

DAVE

Christ! So this is a lot more than just screwing us for a ransom on an Old Master. What are they after? *(reads:) è necessario rispondere alle nostre esigenze o si perde ciò che di valore più.* Meet our demands or you will lose what you most value. So, what does Venice value most dearly?

FABRIZIO

That's what you're here to help us work out, David. You insure most of it. At the moment we're working on two fronts. The anti-terrorist section are certain it's an advance warning of a full-scale terrorist attack. I'm not convinced, yet. I'm taking a gamble, but I think that at some point along the way, we will get told that something very valuable indeed will be stolen or destroyed unless we pay up—which is precisely what happened with the Botticelli last time we worked together. And you stopped that happening, without paying the ransom. That was a good job, and I could certainly do with your help again. *If* that's what this is, I think the ransom demand will be made round about the fourth or fifth target, after they've convinced us they really mean business. So far, this is just toying with us.

DAVE

Possibly. Nothing actually very valuable has been attacked yet, so we have to track them down before it reaches the really serious stage of the game—we don't want them trashing a Carpaccio just to show they mean it. A lot depends on what the next one turns out to be: *potenza lascia*. Something to do with boats? —But so far, I agree, the whole thing doesn't feel like a terrorist attack to me—you certainly don't get seven warnings of a terrorist attack. Any other clues? What about those biblical references at the bottom. I'm not a bible man so you'll have to remind me—

FABRIZIO

Well, I looked them up. I assumed they were signatures, in some sense. But I'm baffled. The Matthew passage is Christ walking on the water and Peter says to him, Lord, if it's you, tell me to come to you on the water. The Luke verse is the thief on the cross, saying if you're the Christ, save yourself and save us. John 1: 25 is the question to John the Baptist: why are you baptizing if you're not the messiah or Elijah or one of the prophets. And the Genesis reference is Abraham to Lot, saying go away from me: and if you go to the right, I will go to the left; if you go to the left, I will go to the right. Well, the only thing they have in common is some sort of hypothetical—if you are, if you go, and so on. But they may be just teasing us —Matthew, Luke, John as just the signatures on the letter, but —

Dave's mobile phone rings. He gestures to Fabrizio and then answers it.

DAVE

Ah, hello. Is that Kate? —What a nice surprise. *(pause)* Yes, I'd love to. Of course I'm free. Absolutely. Say, forty minutes. *(pause)* Yes. The garden is at the back of the palazzo. From the vaporetto, just walk through from the landing stage, or if you're walking anyway come in from the side. It's, er— turn right out of the Campo San Barnabo, along Fonde Rezzonico and there's a gate on your left. I'll see you there. Soon. Glad you rang.

FABRIZIO
(grins at him) Pleasure with business, eh.

DAVE
Frankly, I didn't think this burning adverts thing would be a big deal. Thought I'd just be able to enjoy a few days in lovely Venice. So —did you get that name for me? I know I shouldn't have asked— but you haven't seen her.

FABRIZIO
OK, David. Yes. I owe you, after all. Her name's Yekaterina, surname Coleman. Dual nationality, English-Russian—note the Russian first name. But she's not staying at the Calcina. She's at the Albergo next door.

DAVE
Interesting. Bit odd. Cheaper, maybe. Any rate, I now have a date, for lunch. Look, I'm going to have to think all this over. Usual rules? I'm not officially here or part of your investigation team, but you'll keep me posted if you can? And I can take a copy of the threat letter, yes. Anything else? What about the remaining two targets?

FABRIZIO
'*più bella illusione ottica*' and '*insensato*'. The most beautiful optical illusion. And: *insensato*: senseless, meaningless. Your guesses would be as bad as mine. But the third one, the arches, may happen today— it's been one target a day, so far. The department of works has men checking all the

main bridges, looking for explosives, anything suspicious. But so far the attacks have been pretty mild stuff, a few small fires—if it's a ransom pattern, I really can't think they'd actually blow up a bridge at this stage. But we don't know. Just be careful on bridges today!

DAVE
We definitely don't insure bridges. OK, I'll think about the general pattern —after lunch! Be in touch.

FABRIZIO
Another thing, old friend. Your lunch date —I did some checking. She's a freelance journalist.

DAVE
Is she indeed? She didn't say. Interesting.

13. EXT. ABOARD A VAPORETTO.

Dave is aboard a vaporetto on the Grand Canal at Salute, heading towards Rialto. Scores of people pile on board. Some dump luggage and bags onto the baggage rack. Others scramble to the sides to get a good view. Most are taking photographs.
As it goes under the Accademia bridge, Dave looks warily up at the underside of the bridge.
At Ca' Rezzonico, he gets off and pushes through the crowd into the Casa. In the little cafe, he buys a baguette and a coffee and then goes through to the garden.

14. EXT. CA' REZZONICO. GARDEN.

Kate is seated, waiting, with a baguette and a bottle of water. He comes over and sits beside her.

DAVE
Kate, hello. You took my advice, then.

KATE
Yes, indeed. Hello. And I hope you don't mind if I need some more advice too. I'm a bit bewildered by Venice.

DAVE
Not the only one. So, where did you get to this morning?

KATE
I just wandered, walking, taking the vaporettos, enjoying the water and the light, and the buildings. It's fantastic, but all a bit overwhelming. I do love this little garden, though, and I thought if you can get this so right, maybe I should pick your brains a bit more. What would you recommend then?

DAVE
How long have you got?

KATE
I'm booked in till Sunday.

DAVE
At the Calcina?

KATE

Er, sort of. I got a special deal. Last minute.

DAVE

So what do you do? And how come you've never been to Venice before?

KATE

Oh, I do this and that. I used to write a bit. About avant-garde art movements. But I'm not really into Venetian art at all, not my period, not my taste, and there's been precious little avant-garde about the place for a long while. So I never thought Venice itself was really my scene, and friends had put me off—the crowds, the tourist thing. It is pretty packed, isn't it.

DAVE

You haven't even come for the Biennale? *(slight pause)* Well, I told you, the best time to see Venice is when the tourists —that is, the other tourists—have all gone. Most come thinking they'll be sitting on their wonderful balcony overlooking the Grand Canal. They end up in some grotty hotel on the mainland, in Mestre, and have to take the train in every morning and then make sure they catch the last one out at night. The last vaporetto back to the railway station at night is sheer hell. And of course most of the people who actually work here also live in Mestre — since they can't afford the property prices, which are spiralling ever upwards thanks to the rich shits who buy an apartment for some ludicrous price and then visit it for just a few

days in the year. So the cooks, the waiters, the gondolieri, even the policemen, all head back to Mestre around 10.30, which is why you can't get a meal late and the place goes dead. Which is when I love it.

KATE
So while I'm waiting for the last train and the last of the other tourists to have left, where do I go in the daylight? Where do I find the real Venice?

DAVE
Well, don't join the queue for San Marco, for a start. That will really put you off, for life. Or the Ducal Palace, unless you get up very early. Look, if you're going to be here on Sunday morning, I'll take you to Mass—

KATE
(interrupts with a laugh) That's the weirdest offer I've had for a while!

DAVE
—to Mass in San Marco. It's by far the best way to see the basilica—and to hear it. Fantastic choir. You have to sit through High Mass, in Latin. But that's fabulous in its own way. And infinitely better than fighting your way through a crowd of tour groups being shepherded through the place.

KATE
OK, that's a deal. But where do people go who aren't tourists. I love the feel of the actual

city, the architecture, the buildings, the light, the water. That's what interests me. I'm not, as I said, all that keen on the kind of art they have in the museums and galleries here.

DAVE

But that's definitely not the way to see the art. The best gallery in Venice is the Chorus Pass.

KATE

The what?

DAVE

You can buy an entrance pass, called the Chorus, to fifteen churches around Venice, with some absolutely marvellous paintings and sculptures, altarpieces, frescoes, ceilings, all *in situ*. Works by Tintoretto, Rubens, Titian, Veronese, and lots of 'minor' artists, but in the churches they actually produced them for, still in place—and *that*'s when you see what they were all about. Look, I'll take you to see the Tintorettos in his own local church, in the parish he barely left for the whole of his life. He was their local painter and decorator, not some detached artist making works of art for gallery walls or for wealthy connoisseurs to stand in front of with a catalogue and an appreciative expression on their face. Or you can see his other line of work in the Scuola Grande di San Rocco, where he painted enormous walls and ceilings for the confraternity of Saint, well, Rock—

15. EXT. ON A VAPORETTO.

A vaporetto is passing under the Rialto bridge. As it does so, suddenly thick black smoke starts to pour out of one of the bags on the baggage rack. There is a loud ticking noise coming from the bag. The passengers start to panic. One of the crew lunges towards the bag and hurls it over the side of the boat into the water. It sinks. As panic subsides, some cheering and clapping for the crewman.

16. EXT. CA' REZONNICO. GARDEN

Dave has clearly just finished an enthusiastic eulogy on Tintoretto and others.

KATE
Wow! And I thought you were in insurance, not art history.

DAVE
Fair point. But insurance isn't always boring, you know. We actually insure some of those galleries, and a lot of the paintings. So I *have* to know about them.

KATE
(teasing) Is that why you're here now? Trying to sell insurance policies on Old Masters? Special introductory offer: three for the price of two?

DAVE
Ah, no professional questions please. Trade secrets. Now, what precisely is it you do? You write —what—?

His mobile phone rings. He answers it immediately.

Fabrizio?— *(listens, longish pause)* OK. You're heading there yourself? Where shall we meet? —Caffe del Doge. Near enough. Fine. Are the vaporetti suspended? No? Then give me, say, twelve minutes. *(to Kate)* Sorry, Kate, something's come up. Tintorettos some other time. Er, how about dinner this evening?

KATE
Not this evening, no.

DAVE
You're booked for something?

KATE
(slightly hesitant) There's a mid-week match.

DAVE *(incredulous)*
What? Football? You cannot be serious. Venezia are crap! Who are they playing?

KATE
Inter, I hope. I'm a football fan. *(grins)* I'm from Liverpool, after all.

DAVE *(getting up to go)*
Crazy. They're not even in Serie A, are they? Right, tomorrow evening? How about the Locanda Montin, at 7 pm. I'll pick you up at 6.45. That suit? But you'd better give me the name of your hotel. *(He realises he's just blundered.)* Or I can meet you at the Zattere landing stage. Is that OK?

KATE
(has noticed the slip)
I'll be at the Zattere. 6.45. Fine.

17. INT. CAFFE DEL DOGE.

Fabrizio and Dave are talking over coffee.

DAVE
Well, we know they really do mean it now. But what is it they mean? Still no specific demands? What's the eventual target and what's the price? When are they going to let us know? Another letter in the lion's mouth?

FABRIZIO
They could repeat this stunt of course, with variations—they know we can't search every bag every time anyone gets on a vaporetto, and we can't realistically stop people getting on board with their bags—but the next one could contain explosives—and they know that we know that. It's getting serious.

DAVE
But you think this one actually didn't contain explosives? It was just a smoke bomb and a loud clock? Pretty neat anyway—radio controlled, or just a mobile phone call as the trigger—pity they threw it into the water. But they probably banked on that. A water-logged burnt-out bag won't tell us much. And salvaging it would raise too many alarms, that it wasn't just an accident.

FABRIZIO
Rumours are already circulating—and there's already footage of the vaporetto fire up on YouTube. Venice is getting popular on YouTube.

DAVE
Interesting. That was pretty fast. Who's put it up there? That might be worth chasing?

FABRIZIO
We've already checked. In fact, there's quite a few uploaders—mainly American tourists, and a couple of local kids who were on board, hardly suspects.

DAVE
You've compiled all the footage?

FABRIZIO
We only have what was uploaded—just a few seconds, and of course only shows the actual incident. Not who put the bag there in the first place—probably way back, at Ferrovia, where you'd expect people with luggage. Then they got off somewhere in between, if it was fired remotely—so we'd have to call for every mobile phone and tourist camera on the boat to be examined— and that's just not possible. And it might spread real panic anyway.

DAVE
You're going to have to start anticipating a bit better— if it's a ransom on, say, a church, they've already shown they can pull something like that off.

FABRIZIO

And now they don't even have to specify in advance which painting or which building is the target. If they do, we could organise some protection, a defence. But if the message is just ‘a Rubens’ or ‘a church’, we couldn't risk the gamble. We'd have to pay up. Agreed?

DAVE

Sounds right. Always a lot easier than actually stealing something and being paid to give it back. They know they can't sell, say, a Giorgione or a Titian anyway. This way they don't need to..

FABRIZIO

And assessing the risk is partly up to you—it's probably going to be your insurance at stake, since only a Lloyd's syndicate is likely to be involved—everbody else has pulled out of the market after the last few ransom attempts. At some point *you* will have to decide how much you're willing to pay.

DAVE

There's too many targets, aren't there. Bloody nightmare. What's the next warning? —I'm still puzzled why have they've given us so many? We only needed two or three at most—we're already pretty well convinced that they know what they're doing. They could have stopped here. But still no demands? Maybe we missed the post.

FABRIZIO
The next warning is the one about ‘power gives way to sail’. That could mean the target is a cruise liner. All the cruise companies have been told to be extra alert.

DAVE
A cruise liner? Something *really* big—because they don't want any hesitation when they do give us the final target? They take out a cruise liner and then threaten San Marco itself. What's the price of that?

FABRIZIO
What Venice most values, eh?

DAVE
Does your anti-terrorism squad still think it's terrorism? Political? Ideological? But if so, what's the demand, the motive, the aim?

FABRIZIO
The top brass don't buy my ransom warning theory. They're convinced we've just been lucky : two *failed* attempts to set fire to things, and this last one was definitely a bomb that also failed to go off properly. I think those ‘failures’ were deliberate, but I'm in a minority —the anti-terrorism squad are now planning pre-emptive strikes. Known suspects. Anarchists. Politicos. Different kind of insurance, I suppose.

They sit sipping coffee, stumped. Pause.

DAVE
Something else is mildly bothering me, Fabrizio. Different topic, I'm afraid. You say Katerina Coleman is some kind of journalist. What's her field? Sport?

FABRIZIO
Well, Google her. She does freelance features. Modern artists, art movements. Something like that. Didn't really register with me.

DAVE
Yes, that's sort of what she said herself. But she's never been to the Biennale. Odd. I'm just curious. A sort of hunch, maybe. Why did she rise to my lunch bait? Flattering, but a bit unexpected. *(pause)* OK, I'm heading back to the Hotel Leonardo. On the pattern we've seen so far, you've got till tomorrow to crack the problem of power giving way to sail—but I'm beginning to suspect, or hope, that maybe none of this is really my problem—that it's not an insurance scam at all. If it's straight terrorism, we don't pay out.. Ring me if —

18. EXT. STREET IN SANT ELENA. AFTERNOON. SIESTA TIME.

Several heavily armed police raid an apartment in a working class street in the district of Saint Elena. Three young men, perhaps Arabs, are arrested and taken away.

19. EXT. STREET IN SANT ELENA.
LATE AFTERNOON.

Kate is strolling around. Long distance shots: she stops and chats briefly to anyone she passes. Inaudible conversations.

20. INT. HOTEL LEONARDO ROOM.

Dave is working on his laptop, muttering inaudibly to himself.

21. EXT. OUTSIDE VENEZIA FOOTBALL GROUND. EVENING.

Kate walks towards the the ground, hesitates. Approaches a policeman on duty near the ground.

KATE
Scusi, per favor. Da quale parte dello stadio per i sostenitori di Venezia?
(Which part of the ground for the Venice supporters?)

POLICEMAN
Sei una tifosa dei Lagunari?! Di dove sei?

KATE *(smiles)*
Non, non è un fan di Venezia. Ma voglio osservare il calcio. E sono da Liverpool.

POLICEMAN
Liverpool! Liverpool! ?

KATE *(laughs)*
Ma non. Everton! Everton!

POLICEMAN
Ah, blu, non rossi! Benvenuti, signorina.
Vai alla parte a destra.

KATE
Grazie, grazie.

She buys a ticket and goes to the stand with the local Venice supporters. In a long shot, she starts chatting to some youngsters on the terrace waiting for the game to start.

POLICEMAN
(points her out to incoming supporters as they pass— whispers conspiratorially:)
La signora è da Liverpool—una scout per l'Everton, mi creda.

WRITTEN:] Day Three: Thursday

22. EXT. STREET. DAWN.

A police raid on another apartment block in a different street in the Sant Elena district. Four men, middle-aged, working class, are bundled away in a police launch.

23. INT. HOTEL ROOM. MORNING.

Kate is working at her computer. Pauses. Thinks. Makes a phone call on her mobile.

KATE
Sarah? Morning, love. You OK? *(pause)*
Yes, still in Venice. Got a moment? *(pause)*

Fine, fine. It's working out. But I need to check some details I can't track down here. Following a lead. There was a piece I remember that got spiked, so it's not on-line. About a sting operation on a paedophile priest. *(pause)* Yes, in Venice. Three years ago, maybe. Do a search on 'Dominic Savio', if that helps. *(pause)* Yup. Email me anything you can dig up. I need names. Thanks, love. Bye.

24. INT. HOTEL LEONARDO ROOM.

Dave is reading on-line a manual of regulations.

DAVE *(to himself)*
Right: international-regulations-for-preventing-collisions-at-sea. How boring. But let's see what we can find.

25. INT. OFFICE.

Fabrizio is standing looking at the very large scale wall map of Venice. He looks frustrated and impatient. He looks at his watch.

26. INT. HOTEL LEONARDO ROOM. AFTERNOON.

Dave is lying on his bed, reading a Bible, in Italian.

27. INT. OFFICE. LATE AFTERNOON.

Fabrizio is sitting at his desk, head down, fast asleep on his arms. His phone rings.

FABRIZIO

(answers phone a bit groggily)
David. Hello. No, nothing to report. *(listens, laughs)* You've spent the whole day reading the Bible? In Italian? Well, it's good for your Italian. But you've drawn a blank. *(pause)* Yes, me too. OK, go to your dinner date. Hope you have better luck. *(suddenly remembers)* Oh yes, there is something to report. Something a bit strange. I was going to ring you but it seemed maybe just some sort of a weird coincidence. Odd though.
We raided a couple of places early today, precautions, anticipations. Nothing turned up. But I notice from the arrest reports that one of the men we detained had your lady's first name and a mobile phone number on a piece of paper. Katerina. That's not a common name around here, after all. *(longish pause)* Yes, well he apparently said it was just a woman he met at the football match last night. So nobody's done anything about it, yet. *(longish pause)* She did, did she? Well, perhaps we should pull her in for questioning. Or maybe you can find out what she's up to. It looks as if she may not be interested in you for your good looks and charm, after all. *Ciao*!

28. EXT. FONDAMENTE ZATTERE. EARLY EVENING.

Dave and Kate are strolling along the fondamente. Coming towards them in the Giudecca Canal is a large yacht which cruises down the canal every evening, with its several masts outlined in bright lights. People are watching it from the fondamente as the sun starts to set behind it.

Suddenly a small rubber dinghy with an outboard motor rapidly comes across the water from the Isola di Giudecca. It is difficult to make out but there is a figure crouched in the stern. The dinghy is about to pass dangerously close in front of the yacht, which is hooting its horn by now, when the dinghy swerves directly into the bows of the yacht and is ploughed under the water by it, almost sliced in two. The dinghy explodes like a burst balloon. The figure in the stern disappears into the waves. Horror and consternation from those watching. A policeman on the quay starts running towards the scene, speaking into his radio.

KATE
(turning away, into Dave's arms)
That's dreadful!

DAVE
(comforts her, then very slowly:) It *may* not be quite what you think. Just a moment, Kate.

Dave pulls out his mobile phone and makes a call, over her shoulder. She is taken aback at what seems a callous gesture. Disengages herself quickly.

DAVE

Fabrizio. I think I've just solved target three for you. You'll get reports pronto.
One of your uniform guys is already on the job. But don't believe any first reports.
I happened to be there, or rather here, on the spot. When you can, you might join us—
at the Locanda Montin. OK?

KATE

You're not really an insurance salesman, are you?

DAVE

I never said I was. I'm an insurance investigator—as I think you know already, Kate. Since you're an investigative journalist, yes? So let's have some dinner after all—
and talk about what we're both investigating

29. EXT. GARDEN RESTAURANT AT LOCANDA MONTIN.

Dave and Kate are at a table, having a glass of wine, waiting for their order. Which duly arrives during the following exchange. They eat while talking:

DAVE

Right, first things first. I don't think what we just saw was a death, or an accident.
I think the figure in the boat was a dummy and the dinghy was radio-controlled. Nor was it trying to blow up the yacht, which is what the anti-terrorist squad are probably about to proclaim to the world.

KATE

Well, that makes me feel a lot better. But even more puzzled. What is going on, Dave, and what's your involvement?

DAVE

You first, I think, Kate. You'd better know that the *police* are wondering what *your* involvement is, and in particular why your name and phone number were on a guy they picked up this morning in a sweep of political activists. Yes—I have a contact in the police—whom you'll probably meet pretty shortly. So you'll need answers for him. Why not rehearse them with me first?

KATE

(thinks a moment) The name and phone number bit is quite simple. I went to the football match last night as the easiest way to ask a few questions to people who might know some answers. It's wonderful how watching a match together loosens people's tongues. They thought at first I was a scout for a Liverpool football club, which helped a lot! I told them I was actually a journalist doing a piece on how local people in Venice have a tough time of it, by contrast with all the well-off tourists who crowd the place out. The Venice the tourists never see, that kind of line. So I gave my contact details to several people there, who said they might be willing to talk to me about it. The guy who got picked up was presumably one of them. Do you know his name?

DAVE

No. But that's not *really* what you're writing about, is it. What were those questions, Kate? What are you really working on?

KATE

(pause) OK, I'll come clean. I've been researching a major feature article, maybe even a book, on some of the new protest and resistance movements across Europe, the New Provos in Amsterdam, the Black Cats in Athens, the United Leprechauns in Dublin —

DAVE

(laughs) The what!

KATE *(smiles)*

Yes, United Leprechauns. Radical Greens. Part of the point is that these new movements use different weapons from the old ones, including humour and comedy, and political piss-taking. The United Leprechauns are a hoot, and pretty effective at taking the piss out of the established political parties and ideologies. Any rate, I was interviewing some French activists recently and they said they were getting rumours on the networks of something big about to happen in Venice, of all places. I started to check it out, and discovered a few websites that interested me, something different, a new tactic. Then one of the French guys emailed me on Monday with the footage of those adverts going up in flames and his message was: It's starting. So I got the next flight here and have been trying to dig a bit.

DAVE
Any results?

KATE
Wait a moment. It's your turn now. Your profile's on the net if you know where to look, so I do know you work for Lloyd's, and I guess you're here because Lloyd's is liable for some of the ‘targets’—that was the word you used on the phone to—was it Fabrizio?—your police contact.

DAVE
Sharp hearing. Yes, all true. But I'm not sure we're talking about the same thing. We, Fabrizio and I at least, think what's probably happening is one of those scams where the final target is not actually damaged, stolen, whatever. Normally it's a painting or sculpture, which is easier to damage than to steal, but sometimes it can be a whole building. It's a variation on a protection racket or a ransom demand: you make it clear that you *could* damage something in a pretty big way and then demand enough to stop you from actually doing it. In some circumstances we will pay up rather than risk losing a Michaelangelo, a Picasso, or a Palladian villa. Even on one occasion a super-star footballer. They threatened to blind him. My job is to try to put a spoke in the works *before* we reach the endgame.

KATE
So what's the final target?

DAVE

Good question. But no answer, yet. We don't know. Just a message: ‘meet our demands or lose the thing Venice values most’ —whatever that is—and we've had no demands at all, yet. Only a series of pretty low-key but worryingly competent warnings. The burning adverts were the first, the toilets the next, a sort of fake attack on the Rialto bridge, and now this—whatever it was. But I certainly don't think it was a suicide bomber. It just doesn't fit. That was definitely only a dummy figure in the dinghy and the collision was deliberate, radio-controlled from a good distance away. But why? A dummy run? Just to show us what they could do it if they wanted? But they've already shown us that.

KATE

Any actual clues to go on?

DAVE

Sorry, I obviously can't bring you in on anything specific unless Fabrizio says it's OK. He'll be here soon. *(pause)* Well, maybe there is something you can have a crack at. It's sort of in the public domain after all, well, in the Bible anyway. I'm baffled. A message they sent was sort of signed, with four names, but the names are biblical: Matthew, Luke, John, no Mark but just Genesis, each of them with a verse reference. Can't remember the passages exactly, but one was Peter asking Jesus to let him walk on water, another was about John the Baptist baptising, then the bad thief mocking Christ for not saving himself, and a

weird verse from Genesis about me walking on the left if you walk on the right and vice versa. Baffling. I spent the day reading the bloody Bible. In Italian!

KATE

Do they correlate with the targets—water with water maybe? Fire with—no, doesn't work. Or are they paintings in the Accademia or one of the churches—Christ walking on water, the bad thief, and so on.

DAVE

Good try. Interesting. There are some paintings that would fit. That *might* be it — but I can't find any connection with what's happened so far, so perhaps they're not 'signatures' at all but the actual targets. That's worrying.

KATE

Let me think. *(drinks more wine)*
Do the passages have anything in common? The same words? A phrase?

DAVE

Yes, but it doesn't seem to help. Each passage does have the same phrase: 'if you'—if you are the Christ, if you aren't Elijah, if you walk, etc — in Italian, '*sei si*'. If you—what?

KATE

This is clearly a three glass problem, Watson. More wine, I think. *(Drinks slowly. Pause.)*
Got it! And it tells us quite a lot.

Whoever wrote your message reads his, or her, bible in Latin, the Vulgate, not in Italian. The phrase ‘if you’ isn't 'sei si'— in the Latin Vulgate, it's—I'll bet you—‘si tu’.
Which means—?

DAVE
If you—ah, in Italian ‘si tu ’ would be: ‘Yes, you! ’ But— so what? I'm still no wiser.

KATE
‘Situ’ is actually short for Situationist.
The Situs were followers of the Situationist International. Those texts are telling you that you're dealing with situationists. And ones who read Latin! That should narrow the field!

DAVE
Situationists? What the hell are they?
Hang on. Rings a pretty faint bell.
Way back in the nineteen-sixties? Paris May events and all that?

KATE
It fits—

Fabrizio enters the garden, motions to a waiter to bring some wine, and joins them, overhearing.

FABRIZIO
What fits?

DAVE
Kate, meet Fabrizio. Fabrizio, Kate. Details later. I think we can trust her, Fabrizio. OK?

Cautious greetings between Fabrizio and Kate.

DAVE
She might have just given us a lead.
What do you know about the Situationists?

FABRIZIO
Situationists? Long time ago. They were the bunch who constantly expelled each other—until there were only two left and one of *them* was in a lunatic asylum, right?

KATE *(smiles)*
That's part of the story, yes. But at their height they were brilliant. Provocateurs, theorists, activists. They created the whole *style* of May 1968. They saw modern society as dominated by the spectacle, by the media, by the fetishism of commodities, by consumerism, above all by the image. Guy Debord wrote a stunning treatise, *The Society of the Spectacle*, which spelt out their analysis, and in practice they set out to destroy the grip of the spectacle by creating situations, events, happenings, which would shatter the image, puncture the consensus, turn the media on itself. The '68 *évenéments* for them were one huge situation, against the spectacle. *(pause)* And I think your guys are new situationists.

FABRIZIO
Well, there *were* some Italian Situationists, but they're all long dead and gone and I doubt if anybody's ever heard of them in Venice! There was a guy called Sanguinetti, wasn't there, who wrote a crazy book?

KATE

Yes, the *Rapporto Veridico,* 'on the last chance to save capitalism in Italy'— which bamboozled the whole ruling class in Italy into thinking he had provided them with a perfect stratgy for reinstating fascism—only for him to use their responses to unmask the secret connections between them all. Sanguinetti sent the book anonymously to every leading businessman, banker, politician, media mogul, and then sat back and watched them entangle themselves in a conspiracy which *he* was directing. A kind of infiltration *by* the left.

FABRIZIO

Well, maybe. Let me think. *(pause)*
Yes, I can see how some of what's been happening might be Situationist in spirit—burning those adverts, certainly.

KATE

Yup. Setting fire to a toilet!

DAVE

All the public toilets, Kate. That same night. And then setting off smoke bombs on a vaporetto, not a real bomb. And crashing a fake suicide bomber into a showpiece yacht? Are these the kind of things your situationists would do?

KATE

Yes. Indeed. Their style entirely!

DAVE
But what's the point!! These are just, well, silly jokes! Pranks.

FABRIZIO
Or are they just *imitating* Situationist games, while actually plotting something far more serious? I wouldn't get carried away by this idea. There may still be a real sting in the tail.

KATE
Have they specified any more targets?

DAVE
Can I show her the letter? She might spot something we haven't.

FABRIZIO
Wait a moment. I need to ask you something first, Kate. What's your connection with our local politicos, and what are you really up to yourself? I have to warn you that we seem to have found a connection between yourself and a leading local trades unionist. Care to comment?

DAVE
Sorry, Fabrizio, I've already told her about the name and phone number.

Fabrizio is about to react angrily.

DAVE
Well, Kate? You ducked my question earlier.

KATE *(to Fabrizio)*
I've already explained to Dave that I'm writing a piece on the new resistance movements round Europe, and I was following a kind of tip-off that something was about to break in Venice. I actually had a hunch that some version of the Situs might be involved, because of the YouTube footage of those huge adverts going down in flames—which is frankly why I got the verbal clue about 'si tu' quite so easily. Well, last night I was trying to track down a website I thought might be connected. One which seemed to come right out of the kind of disaffected, pissed-off, radicalised youth opposition groups that are all over Europe now.
So I asked around at the football match and gave my name and number to people who were quite prepared to tell me where the drugs were being dealt, where the street gangs were operating, where the squatters were—but nobody knew anything about the actual website I was interested in. I'd managed to establish that it was run from a location somewhere in Sant' Elena and I was nosing around to see if I could get some clues as to who might be responsible. Is that enough? What was the name of this connection I'm supposed to have? Was it Antonio Rossellini? He seemed the most genned up? Is he a politico? Some kind of police suspect?
I obviously didn't know that.

DAVE *(tries to lighten things)*
So you weren't just trying to pick up Italian men?

KATE *(grim smile)*
They don't need any encouragement.

FABRIZIO *(still annoyed)*
So what is this website you mentioned? Politics? Anarchism? Situationists?

KATE
No. Not directly. And that's what's interesting about it. It's basically just some looped video footage and several live webcams. But it's devastating. Because it shows Venice as a *totally awful place to visit*—one of the webcams continuously shows only the most absolutely crowded parts of the main tourist trail, another shows the Mestre railway station, and there's repeated footage of the last vaporettos absolutely packed with crushed tourists trying to get to the last train, and so on. It's a kind of *anti* Tourist Office for Venice. And it has a slogan: "The tourist comes to Venice hoping for paradise and ends up eating tomato sauce on a cold pizza." It would really put you off coming at all!

FABRIZIO *(calming down)*
And so you think the same people are responsible for the website and for these—pranks? Why?

DAVE
Read her the letter, Fabrizio— the last lines.

FABRIZIO
(pulls a copy out of his pocket and reads:) — è necessario rispondere alle nostre esigenze o si perde ciò che più valore—

DAVE
'Or lose what Venice most values'—tourists!! *That*'s what their final target is. To rid the whole place of tourists!

FABRIZIO
(pause) You're right. *(pause)* I'm afraid. That's a pretty big target. And pretty vulnerable —to straight terrorism.

DAVE
I can see that. But how do you get rid of tourists? What would do that? A maniac with a machine gun in San Marco square? A bomb in the basilica? Or flying a plane into the campanile? That's tomorrow's target, isn't it?

FABRIZIO
No. Tomorrow is '*più bella illusione ottica*' —the most beautiful optical illusion. The campanile is Saturday—if we're right.

KATE
Can I see the letter now?

FABRIZIO *(hesitates, then decides)*
Yes. You've given us this lead to a website. I need the details. Write them down, Kate. *(He hands her a notebook and she does so)* And you can keep that copy of the letter.

I have lots of copies by now, all of them scribbled over with my hopelessly wrong guesses. *(pause)* I think you may be right, so if you can work something out, I'd be grateful. Maybe this *is* a sort of situationist situation. I need to get back to the office and liaise with the anti-terrorism squad. I'm not sure whether this changes how they'll think about what's happened—or is going to happen, but they're now convinced that the episode tonight was a real suicide bomber operation and they're dragging the canal for the body. Of course, if they do find a real body, your jokey Situ notion is pretty well ruled out, isn't it? In the meantime, Kate, all this is *strictly* off the record, understand. *(Kates nods)*

DAVE

OK, I'll walk Kate back to her hotel and fill her in on anything she's still missing. We'll ring you first thing tomorrow?

FABRIZIO

(calls over waiter who is anxiously trying to close the place by now) Sul conto della polizia. *(to Dave and Kate:)* It's the least I can do. Buonanotte.

30. EXT. MOONLIGHT.

Dave and Kateare walking in wonderful moonlight. Quietly. Then:

DAVE

So which hotel am I taking you to?

KATE *(bristles)*
Definitely mine.

DAVE
Sorry! No, I didn't mean that. I meant: which hotel are you really staying at? You told me you were at the Calcina but you're not there, are you?

KATE
I'm at the cheaper one next door. Sorry, but I didn't want to be pestered by some strange man I'd met on a plane.

DAVE
Fair enough. Do I pester you?

KATE
Perhaps it's too early to say.

DAVE
Well, am I still taking you to Mass on Sunday?

KATE *(laughs)*
If San Marco is still there — yes, please.

They carry on walking through whatever beautiful parts of Venice you want to enjoy here.

WRITTEN:] Day Four : Friday

31. INT. THE FRARI CHURCH. DOORWAY. EARLY MORNING.

Two clerical doorkeepers are manning the door, refusing entrance.

A party of four American tourists are trying to argue their way in, led by a large loud Big Al, and all are highly indignant.

BIG AL
But we have to be at the Dogal Palace in thirty minutes. And I wanna see the Bellini first. It's in our schedule.

DOORKEEPER
The church is closed to tourists until 9 A.M.

An old woman in black squeezes past and goes in.

BIG AL
So what you letting her in for?
The place is open, isn't it!

DOORKEEPER
You may come in only to attend Mass.
Until 9 o'clock.

BIG AL
Right, we'll watch your mass then. That OK?

DOORKEEPER

(sighs, as lets them in) Please remember this is a church, not a museum. Please, no cameras during mass.

BIG AL

Jeesus, no cameras. How am I going to remember the place? *(pulls out a plan of the church)* Now, where's the Bellini?

DOORKEEPER

In the sacristy chapel. At the far side of the church. And Mass begins there in five minutes. Or you may attend at one of the side chapels. Please do not —

The group of tourists simply push past him and start to wander, goggle-eyed. Another group appears at the door.

DOORKEEPER *(wearily)*

La chiesa è chiuso ai turisti fino alle nove. L'église est fermée aux touristes jusqu'à neuf heures. The church is closed to tourists. Die Kirche ist für Touristen geschlossen.

32. INT. FRARI. SACRISTY .

Mass is beginning at the altar of the Madonna. A handful of worshippers.

PRIEST 1 *(bows and intones)*

Introibo ad altare dei.

Big Al takes a flash photo of the Bellini Madonna altarpiece.

33. INT. FRARI. TRANSEPT.

A priest in mass vestments hurries to the chapel of Bernardo, with just a small altar boy in attendance, who switches lights on in the chapel and Mass commences. No other worshippers.

34. INT. FRARI. TRANSEPT.

Another priest hurries across to the Fiorentini chapel, again with just an altar boy, who switches the lights on.

PRIEST 2 *(bows and intones)*
Introibo ad altare dei

He looks up at the altar— and shrieks!

Gesù Cristo!

The altar niche is blank where the statue of John the Baptist by Donatello should be.

After a shocked pause, Priest 2 races across to the main doorway and shouts to the doorkeepers:

Chiudere le porte. Gli allarmi! La polizia!

They quickly and strenuously close the heavy doors and activate ringing alarm bells.

As the alarms go off, the four American tourists come hurrying out of the side sacristy. As they pass the Fiorentini chapel Big Al consults his plan of the church and then looks at the empty niche above the altar.

BIG AL
Ah shit, I wanted to see that.

BIG AL'S WIFE
What's the problem dear?

BIG AL
Should be a nice big wooden statue of John the Baptism. By Doonatelli Circa, 1386 to 1466. That was number two on my list in this place. Well, that's it for here. Let's get to the San Mark Palazzio.

They go to the door, which is firmly shut.

DOORKEEPER
The door is closed. Nobody leaves until the police arrive.

BIG AL
The police! But we gotta leave *now*.

DOORKEEPER
There has been a theft. Nobody leaves.

BIG AL
Ah, shit! Waddyaknow. First you keep us out, then you keep us in. That's screwed today's schedule. Look, we're due at the cruise ship in just three hours—

DOORKEEPER
(shrugs).

35. INT. HOTEL LEONARDO ROOM.

Dave is sitting at the desk in his room, looking at a website devoted to Situationist material. He is reading Guy Debord, Society of the Spectacle, *on-line.*

His phone rings.

DAVE

Fabrizio? *(listens)* The Sansovino as well? But both are OK? I'll be there in fifteen minutes. Ciao.

Thinks. Makes another call.

Kate? Sorry. Tintoretto is off for this morning. *(pause)* Yes, the fourth strike already. Ring you later. It'll probably be on the news anyway, but you might want to head for the Frari.

36. INT. FRARI.

Several police are gathered round the transept area, which has a number of police barrier ribbons stretched across it. The Donatello is back in place.

Several tourists are shepherded into a group near the door, cowed, and are being questioned.

Fabrizio is sitting quietly in a seat in the monastic choir.

37. EXT. CAMPO DEI FRARI.

Dave hurries into the square from near the Calle della Passion, and stops as he sees police barriers and a crowd near the bridge over to the Fond dei Frari. He goes over to look.

Hanging from the bridge is a life-size full colour flat cut-out figure of the Donatello John the Baptist, apparently hanging by its neck, with a note attached to its chest. Dave bursts out laughing as he reads the note. Then he strolls towards the door of the Frari.

38. INT. FRARI. CHOIR STALLS.

Dave joins Fabrizio.

DAVE
I suppose it's now definitely your case, and mine, not the anti-terrorist squad after all. I like their sense of humour.

FABRIZIO
You've seen John the Baptist's suicide note?

DAVE
Yes: “I couldn't take it any more! Bloody tourists.” *(laughs).* Show me how it was done.

FABRIZIO
OK, you're officially involved now. Not sure there'll be any need for an insurance claim on this. No real damage as far as we can see. But it's now definitely your problem.

Fabrizio walks Dave over to the Fiorentini chapel and waves them both through the police line.

He reaches behind the altar and holds up a shallowly curved sheet of stiff card, about 8 feet high and a few feet wide, with rigid metal edging on three sides. It is painted a grey-blue on one side, with some darker vertical borders. Using a long pole, the kind used for extinguishing high altar candles, Fabrizio carefully but quickly lifts the card into position so that it slots neatly into the front edges of the niche and clicks firmly into place.

He steps back to admire the effect—which is that the niche is now empty. An optical illusion.

DAVE

Target for today: The most beautiful optical illusion. A leaf out of Bellini's book. Precisely the same trick as the Bellini Madonna in the sacristy, but reversed. Brilliant.

FABRIZIO

They only needed the illusion for a few moments and then alarms would be ringing all over the place before anyone spotted it wasn't really gone. By the time I got here they'd discovered the trick and taken it down. But the Sansovino is even better. I nearly had a heart attack when I saw it. We haven't removed it yet. Thought you'd better see if there's any actual damage, but I don't think there is.

They walk to the end of the transept and into the corner chapel, where they pause before the marble statue of John the Baptist, attributed to Sansovino. It is roped off by police ribbons. A policeman is guarding it.

The statue appears to have been attacked and badly damaged: major crack lines criss-cross the front leg and there is a deep black hole in the chest. A large iron hammer is lying on the floor beside the statue. Dave stops abruptly in total dismay.

Fabrizio waves away the policeman, and takes Dave close to the statue. He then starts to slightly peel the edge of what is now seen to be a partly transparent adhesive film, painted to give the effect of the damage, one stuck to the leg and another to the chest.

DAVE

Christ! I see what you mean! I was already doing frantic sums. OK, leave it now that I've seen how it was done. I'll get our sculpture experts out immediately. There may be mild surface scratches. But it doesn't look as if it'll cost us. It's just a kind of self-adhesive kitchen food wrap, isn't it. Not even any glue.

They stand looking at the statue.

DAVE

Helluva warning, though. *Could* have been for real. Any other surprises?

FABRIZIO

We've been looking. Nothing, so far.

DAVE

Let me have a wander. Worries me a bit that the Donatello was double-pronged—the body on the bridge as well as the optical illusion. So is there something else going on with the Sansovino as well?

FABRIZIO

Nothing's missing, we're pretty sure of that.

They wander back across the transept and into the nave, looking around them.

Police, church officials and several friars are already checking off lists at various locations around the church.

FABRIZIO

One clear clue: this *must* have been some kind of inside job. The electronic eyes were de-activated, early this morning, while the cover was put up over the Donatello. And the Sansovino even seems to have been done *after* the first alarms were sounded—while everybody was busy with the 'missing' Donatello. One of the Friars swears that the Sansovino was fine when he saw it about 7. Pretty cool head at work. But whose? We're still questioning the tourists who were here but we've drawn a blank. They're either pretty stupid or *very* good actors—and none of them look capable of this kind of stunt. Which leaves a few old women who have been praying in the place for years. Or the Friars themselves—

DAVE

—Who would hardly want this kind of incident in their own church, especially if there's no insurance pay-out at the end of it. I take it this has already leaked out. The suicidal Baptist hanging from the bridge out there will be on the news and in all the papers by now. So, how much can I tell Kate? I've been reading up on her Situationists. She might be helpful on this if we really are dealing with a bunch of situationist lunatics. She knows their ways of doing things better than we do. I was supposed to meet her now.

FABRIZIO

Well, you can obviously tell her whatever's going to make it into the press anyway. I'm still not sure about her. But we do need to crack the 1911 warning for, presumably, tomorrow? She might have ideas, but this could still be terrorism, not just teasing.

DAVE

Talking of teasing—what's that over there?

Dave goes over to the Canova tomb, steps over the railing, and reaches into the dark triangular 'entrance' to the tomb.

From it he begins to pull a large blow-up of a postcard picture of the Sansovino Baptist, which had been left just inside the tomb, but which is so large that it neatly fills the cavity entrance as he tries to pull it upright —the effect is as if it is the statue itself which is now the focus of the mourning figures on the mausoleum.

DAVE *(laughs)*
Touché! I think I get the message, twice over: Art prefers to be in the tomb rather than face the bloody tourists! The death of the artist — by suicide if necessary!

FABRIZIO *(is not very amused)*
Let's get that finger-printed, though I doubt if they'd make that easy a mistake. *(motions to a policeman to take the image)* It's not the piss-artist that worries me. You realise that both works are of John the Baptist, the precursor, the one who went before —but before what? What comes *after* this? Remember one of the biblical texts was about John the Baptist too. Are we right about the next target: 1911? Is it the campanile? And is it tomorrow? I'm getting worried again.

DAVE
I'm going to ring the London office, get authorisation for an expert appraisal of any damage here, explain the overall situation— sorry, no pun intended —but talking of which, I think I am going to have that meeting after all with Kate, as our handy situationist expert. *(looks at his watch)* Is that OK?

FABRIZIO
I suppose so. I looked into that website she told us about. But it's using an anonymous web-hosting service. Based in Sweden. So tricky to get a legal handle on it. And it just looks to me like a half-hearted schoolboy parody of a Tourist Board website. I'm pursuing it, but I've no real leads yet.

DAVE

I can tell her that, yes? *(into phone)* Kate?
Can you find the Campo San Toma—
and no need to buy a baguette on your way!
Lloyd's are paying for lunch today—
you're now a temporary consultant. OK?

39. EXT. TRATTORIA IN CAMPO S. TOMA.

Kate and Dave are eating a light lunch at an outside table. Dave has just been describing the morning's events. They continue lunch during the following.

KATE

OK, I get all that. The most beautiful optical illusion was today's target. Very Situ. The suicidal John the Baptist hanging from the bridge was already on the news as I left. Back in '65 or so the French Situs floated bloodied Vietcong bodies down the Seine— they were dummies, like the figure in the dinghy yesterday. But I don't think they ever used life-size postcards! What's a Situ message for a tourist postcard: "Wish I wasn't here"? "Wish you weren't here"?

DAVE

Maybe 'si tu' really does mean 'si, tu' — 'yes, *you*' — we're all tourists in Venice these days. So, Yes, it's You who are ruining the place. Maybe we are too.

KATE

Well, one thing I can suggest.
I bet they've read their Walter Benjamin.

DAVE *(munching away)*
Eh? Explain.

KATE *(enjoying her wine)*
OK, pay attention, class. Walter Benjamin, German critic, nineteen-thirties, wrote an influential essay on 'the work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction'. He argued that there had been a shift, in fact a double shift, from the cult image, its religious aura intact, to the art object in the museum or gallery, its aesthetic value as the focus of a new purely commercialised devotion—and then a further shift to mass-produced copies, rendering the art object cheaply accessible everywhere and instantly at our convenience—but now denuded of its aura. Follow that?

DAVE
(he nods, his mouth full, and a bit nonplussed)
Sort of. Go on.

KATE
Benjamin committed suicide, incidentally —
Right. So the Bellini Madonna is absolutely *the* most typical cult object, in its religious niche, its devotional aura, and at the same time it's the most beautiful illusion, since even the niche itself is painted so perfectly that most people think it's a sculpture. It's flat and two-dimensional, not three, but you can be only a few feet away and still not realise that. Now, play the Bellini illusion of being full-bodied and three-dimensional off against the Donatello being apparently stolen through the optical illusion of not being there at all, of an

empty niche, non-dimensional— and then add the digitally printed cut-out of it and the touching up of the Sansovino statue — probably done using Photoshop to get the effects right—and you have the whole Benjamin thesis in a nutshell. The work of art in the age of tourism!

DAVE

And the work of art as tourist postcard, yes? I take it you studied art history!

KATE

No. Much more interesting—I did a crazy pioneering degree course called Image Studies, not just about art but looking at the role of all sorts of images in different societies, different periods, different cultures —and not just art images, but wall paintings in Egyptian tombs, stained glass in cathedrals, court fashions, make-up and tattoos, adverts, cartoons, photography, film, television, digital images— images and power, images and women, images and identity, images and war — you name it, we studied it.

DAVE

Back to the point, please, Kate. Does all this theory give us any practical clues?

KATE

(pause) Come to think of it, Benjamin's essay ends with a reference to images and war — Marinetti's ‘ war is beautiful’ — part of the Futurist line about: ‘We will glorify war— the world’s only hygiene—militarism,

patriotism, the destructive gesture of freedom-bringers, beautiful ideas worth dying for, and scorn for woman.' And so on. I remember that last bit especially, of course. Marinetti was a bloody Fascist. Benjamin's argument was that all efforts to render politics aesthetic end in war. He almost anticipates the atomic bomb in an extraordinary final passage—from memory, something like: 'This is the culmination of art for art's sake. Mankind which in the time of Homer was an object of contemplation for the Olympian gods, is now an object for its own contemplation. Its self-alienation has reached the point where it can experience its own destruction as an aesthetic pleasure of the first order.' — I always think of the end of *Doctor Strangelove* at that point. The bombs going off in a spectacular cinematic symphony. But it could also be about the kind of spectacular terrorist acts we've seen in recent years, 9/11 included. — Well, Benjamin's case is that while Fascism aestheticises politics, the Left has to politicise aesthetics. That's the kind of argument that got me interested in the Situationists in the first place—they were the logical extension of making the art-work into a political intervention—*(she realises that Dave is not listening, distracted)*—Eh, come on, David, you're not even listening — I paid attention when you talked about Tintoretto for twenty minutes yesterday!

DAVE *(thinking hard)*
Sorry, Kate. I've been trying to remember something. You know Marinetti's infamous ‘Manifesto Against Past-Loving Venice‘ — all about ‘filling in the small, stinking canals with the rubble from the ancient collapsing and leprous palaces‘ in order to ‘prepare for the birth of an industrial and militarized Venice, capable of dominating the great Adriatic, a great Italian lake’ —

KATE
—Yes, of course. The one he showered all over Venice in 20,000 pamphlets or 80,000 copies or whatever it was. He wanted to fill in the canals and make roads for cars to take over the city— just like some of the tourists you meet these days. “Gee, let's turn the Grand Canal into a fine six-lane highway—”

DAVE
Yes, yes, yes. But when was it delivered? I'm trying to get a date right.

KATE
Well, the usual account is that he proclaimed it through a megaphone from the clock tower in 1910.

DAVE
From the campanile —which had been demolished after it collapsed in 1902 and was only fully re-opened in 1912. So the ‘1911’ warning might just refer to a new manifesto, also proclaimed from the campanile, imitating Marinetti, coming after him, as it were—

it may not refer to 9-11, the twin towers, at all, but to Marinetti—

KATE
What are you talking about David?

DAVE
I'm clutching at straws. Look, you've seen the rest of the warning letter. We're now up to target six: which simply reads '1911'. We assumed that it was some variation on 9-11 and that we are dealing with a terrorist attack. But Fabrizio thought it referred not to two towers but to the one tower built, or rebuilt, around 1911— the San Marco campanile itself, *the* image of Venice. I'm asking is it going to be the target of some deadly terrorist attack or—maybe — is it just going to be the site for some new Situationist Manifesto? Fluttering leaflets not charred bodies.

KATE
Let me see the letter again.

DAVE
I suppose so. *(gives her his copy of the letter)* Fabrizio says the anti-terrorist section are still taking it all very seriously, closing the campanile for twenty-four hours, putting on heavy security at the airport, hoping no one's going to try to fly a plane into the campanile. But can I really tell them it's *not* going to be like that at all?

KATE *(shrugs)*
Better not. You may be quite wrong.
And they wouldn't listen anyway.
The precautions can't do any harm —
if it's just some sort of manifesto launch,
nothing's lost. But the Situationists were,
in their own way, deadly serious, so maybe
this really is the crunch. *(She looks at the letter)* Look at the seventh and final warning:
Insensato—

DAVE
Literally: senseless. Maybe senseless
violence, meaningless terror. What else?

KATE
Well, it could also be a pun on incensed, very
angry. There was an English group of semi-
Situs who called themselves the Angry
Brigade. They developed out of street theatre,
a guerilla drama group. Maybe this Venice
lot are just a very angry brigade. *Incensato.*
A new Red Brigade. But their weapon, so far,
is a kind of theatre, like the tricks they played
this morning. But what are they angry about?
What are their demands? To get rid of all the
tourists? How?

DAVE
We don't really know, yet. Look, I think
tomorrow is in the hands of the anti-terrorist
squad, whatever we say. And I've cleared it
with London that we're probably not liable for
anything major — yet. I need to unwind.
So I'm going to take this afternoon off work.
Kate, finish your lunch. I promised to show

you some Tintoretto churches. Since we're nearer the Scuola di San Rocco, let's start there instead. Ruskin called it one of the three indispensable buildings in Italy. And it's just round the corner—

40. INT. INSIDE SCUOLA DI SAN ROCCO.

The upper room. Kate and Dave are standing in the middle. The camera tracks round the room, observing the paintings. And the woodwork.

DAVE
Ruskin says—

KATE
Shush. Shush. Shush.

He lets her look in silence. Several dissolves to indicate time passing as she wanders the room. Finally, he takes her hand and leads her gently towards the side room, the Salla dell'Albergo. He leaves her in the doorway, with the enormous Tintoretto Crucifixion facing her.

41. EXT. OUTSIDE MADONNA DELL'ORTO. AFTERNOON.

Dave and Kate are in the little square outside the church.

DAVE
OK, Kate, you wouldn't let me talk in the San Rocco Scuola. Try stopping me here. *(smiles)* My favourite church in Venice. Used to be dedicated to St Christopher, patron saint of travellers and merchants —you can see his

statue over the door—and that *(points to the left side of the square)* is still the Scuola of Santo Cristofero—this was once the main entry point for merchants from the north—originally founded by a curious order of poor weavers, called the Umiliati, the lowly ones, but then taken over by a bunch of wealthy Venetian noblemen—and a usefully miracle-working statue of the virgin and child soon led to the change of name, to Madonna dell'orto— Lady of the Garden—you don't get too many gardens in Venice, mind. There's a whole social history in that shift of patrons—

KATE
And Tintoretto?

DAVE
Yes, this was Tintoretto's local church. Or, better, Tintoretto was a local parishioner. He lived at number 33-99, just round the corner. There's still a Casa Tintoretto. He worked for this church on-and-off for thirty years, and then his son, Domenico, followed him into the ecclesiastical painter and decorator business. Tintoretto & Son. Actually he was really called Jacopo Robusti —Jacob the Strong. Changed it to Jacob the Right Colour. Tinto Retto. Must have looked better on the van. *(she looks quizzically at him and he smiles).* I'm joking. Actually, his Dad was a *tintor* — a dyer, so he was The Little Dyer.

They enter the church.

42. INT. MADONNA DELL'ORTO. NAVE. AFTERNOON.

They stand in the nave. Then Kate gradually wanders down the nave and across to the far right wall, and stops in front of The Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple. As she looks at it, Dave quietly joins her and waits for a while.

KATE
Has this been damaged? There seems to be a line right down the middle.

DAVE
Spot on. But not quite. It was originally in two halves. But that's because it was painted for the two outer doors of an organ. Which used to be in that space just to the right of the sanctuary. Ruskin, and William Morris, would have approved. The work of art as the art of everyday work. Good solid job. Paint an organ cover and create a masterpiece. In fact, several.

Dave takes her gently by the shoulders and steers her towards the sanctuary, stopping in front of the paintings of St Peter and of St Paul.

DAVE
When you opened the doors to play the organ, on the insides of the two doors were these: *The Beheading of Saint Paul* and *The Apparition of the Cross to Saint Peter.* Nowadays, we think of them as art works, so too good for merely decorating an organ, so we put them up on the wall as if in a gallery—

KATE *(totally unimpressed)*
I'm sorry, Dave, but I was brought up a good Liverpool Catholic —I've been trying to respond, but all I can see are versions of those god-awful religious pictures I knew as a kid. They really don't *do* anything for me. I'm not even sure I know what they're on about.

DAVE
Ah. *(long pause)* Well, you were right about the two halves, to begin with. So go back to the *Presentation. (They do so)* On the right of the picture, there is glorious light and sunshine, on the women, the children, and above all on the little Mary, going up the steps towards the High Priest — but on the left, largely in shadows and even in darkness, are the Jews—we're just by the Ghetto—the Old Testament, the world of the Old Law—there are a few patches of light, perhaps the prophets who foretold the coming of the Messiah, the Christ child, but the new revelation, the new Temple, the New Testament, is still to come—the true Church of Saints Peter and Paul which we see — *et voila!* —when the organ doors open and the liturgy actually gets under way— *(he moves her back to the chancel)* But now think of when Tintoretto painted these pictures. And for whom. The 1550s —the height of the ferocious battle between Protestants and Catholics — we're half way through the Council of Trent —and the biggest battle of the lot is over faith versus works. This isn't just about Christians overcoming Jews, but

Rome versus Geneva —Peter and Paul were both martyred in Rome, in the papal city, beheaded and crucified—Peter of course has his keys pretty prominently with him —

KATE
(points to a number of large keys dangling between St. Peter's legs)
Interesting place to put them too!

DAVE *(laughs)*
Absolutely! Power and potency! You get the point. But we've suppressed that kind of reading. Nowadays, people want their art without polemics, without argument. They think it's somehow wrong for art and politics to mix. But even these 'Renaissance masterpieces' were actually polemical, theological weapons for the illiterate, fighting a battle with paint as well as words. *(pause)* Look at those two huge paintings either side of the altar area. On the left, the Golden Calf, the idol of false worship, the worship of money, of gold —this is a church for merchants after all—and on the right, that magnificent Last Judgement—where what you *do* in life will be judged. But there's no point in a Last Judgement, if like the Calvinists, you think the whole thing is predetermined, that you're predestined to either Hell or Heaven, or if like the Lutherans you think it's only faith that matters, not how you actually behave in life—now look up, above the altar—those four women are Strength, Prudence, Justice, Temperance —

the four Virtues you have to practise if you are to lead a good life —

KATE

I'm glad they're women, anyway! —

DAVE

— *(still in full flow)* and just to ram home the point about good works, we're actually looking at one: Tintoretto did those two huge paintings just for the price of the materials, almost as a gift to the church. Admittedly, the materials would have cost a helluva lot— the paintings are each 16 meters high by 6 meters wide — but they're not a bad advert for someone who wanted to land the huge San Rocco contract!

KATE

OK, I take your point, that maybe these aren't just the wishy-washy devotional pictures I grew up with. If you put them into the context of the politics and the polemics of the time, and the sheer hard work and craftsmanship, I can appreciate them a bit more—But I still don't have to like them! Not my taste at all, I'm afraid, Dave. I'm completely and utterly unmoved. I told you I didn't respond to Venetian art. But thanks anyway.

She shrugs and turns away.

43. TRAGHETTO LANDING STAGE. MARCUOLA.

They are waiting for the little traghetto to make its way back to the landing stage.

DAVE

One decent practical tip for Venice. Don't waste money on buying thirty minutes in a gondola for some ludicrous price. You can get the same experience, of being too horribly close to some pretty filthy water, for just one euro. Maybe one fifty. Just take a traghetto across the Grand Canal. Like the locals. Though there are only a handful of crossing points left these days. Er, it's normal to stand upright during the crossing.

Kate looks horrified at this. But scrambles in when the traghetto arrives.

44. EXT. STREETS NEAR HOTEL CALCINA. EARLY EVENING.

Kate and Dave are walking back.

DAVE

We're nearly at the hotel. Are you sure I can't take you to dinner?

KATE

Sorry, Dave. But remember I'm a working girl. I have an article to get on with. And various other things I have to do.

DAVE
In that case, just a brief detour, if I may?
Somewhere special.

KATE
The Guggenheim's nearby isn't it ?
More my taste.

DAVE
That'll be closed by now, I'm afraid.
Catch it first thing when it opens tomorrow.
No, just a little spot worth knowing about.
OK?

Kate nods. They walk.

45. EXT. THE DOGANA POINT. EVENING

Kate and Dave sit quietly, looking across at the expansive view towards S. Marco.

DAVE
I sat on the Dogana's steps
For the gondolas cost too much, that year,
And there were not 'those girls', there was one face—

Kate turns to look at him.

KATE
So who are you reciting?
Not for the first time, I suspect —

DAVE *(grins)*
Touché. It's Ezra Pound, the *Cantos* —

KATE
Bloody Fascist. Great poet though.

DAVE
And a great view, you have to admit.

KATE
Yup. Thanks for that. *(she points)*
Across the water—isn't that Vivaldi's church?

DAVE
Yes. How come you know that?

KATE
I watched a TV programme with a friend of mine, Sarah. All about how Vivaldi wrote music for the women's choir there, who sang all the parts, including even the bass voices. We decided we wanted to visit it some time.

DAVE *(pauses)*
Well, there may well be a concert on there tomorrow. Do you want to go?

KATE
I thought everything was likely to be cancelled tomorrow.

DAVE
Maybe we should just get out of the main part of Venice altogether tomorrow?

KATE
I've enjoyed today.

DAVE
Tomorrow? Torcello, perhaps?
The island and the basilica.

KATE
Let's see. Ring me. I'll go to the Guggenheim by myself, first thing. After that. Maybe.

46. INT. KATE'S HOTEL ROOM

Kate is making a phone call, with her laptop open in front of her.

KATE
Sarah. How are you, luv? *(pause)* I've got something nice to ask you about later. But first, yes, I just got your email. OK, now have you got the full story there? I need a names reminder. I remember the basic story. They filmed this paedophile priest more or less in the act. Yes? And there was an almighty row. But it never got to court. But what was the name of the kid who set up the sting operation? *(listens)* Yes! I was right! Rossellini. Marcello Rossellini. And this blog essay you said you'd found. It's by Rossellini? *(pause)* Went on-line last year. 'On the poverty of tourist life'. Modelled on the Strasbourg pamphlet 'On the poverty of student life'. Yes, I'm just downloading it now. *(she starts to read)* 'We might well say, and no one would disagree with us, that the tourist is the most universally despised creature in Italy, apart from the priest and the policeman...' Yes! *(listens to phone)*

So, what was the problem, Sarah? *(laughs)* No, I see. Not the Doge, Domenica Selvio. But Dominic Savio, patron saint of altar boys. No wonder you couldn't find it for a while. The altar boys in the paedophile sting were all members of the Dominic Savio Guild. *(listens)* Yes, I know. Domenica Selvio was the doge who demolished the Campanile in 1080, in order to rebuilt it more safely. *(pauses)* Maybe there is a connection. Look, luv, check the papers tomorrow. Now, about that other thing —

47. INT. FABRIZIO'S OFFICE. MORNING.

WRITTEN:] Day Five: Saturday

FABRIZIO

(on the phone to Dave, very angry) Have you seen the Venice papers this morning, David. *L'Arena, Il Gazzettino, La Nuova Venezia* — they've all got the full story, and they've all done special editions— they've printed the the letter, got photos, the lot. But they're presenting it as terrorism. Not just the Donatello incident, but all the incidents, the adverts, the toilets, the smoke bomb under the Rialto bridge —so somebody must have given them inside information. Your friend Kate is a damn journalist!— and I gave her a copy of the letter. Including the warnings for today and tomorrow. Off the record! But she couldn't resist a scoop, could she? *(pauses, listens)* Why would she leak it to the local papers?

I don't know. But I'm now off the case completely — they think *I* leaked it and in a sense they're right, thanks to you. The anti-terrorism squad are completely in charge now. There's going to be a complete lock-down. The tourist companies are furious. And the cancellations have started— *(he slams down the phone).*

48. INT. HOTEL LEONARDO ROOM

Dave is on the phone to Kate:

DAVE

You didn't leak it, did you, Kate? *(pauses, listens)* OK, Kate, but I had to ask. I made that point to Fabrizio but he was too angry to listen. At least I'm also now off the case— Lloyds doesn't pay out on terrorist acts. And if you're right, then the Situationists' strategy is working —apparently tourists are frantically cutting short visits and making cancellations. The papers' reports about terrorist attacks are panicking everybody. And the security measures are just making it worse. It's going to be difficult to move in the central area today. I suggest we simply get out of the main island entirely today. So how about going across the lagoon to the oldest part of the Venice archipelago, the first cathedral, at Torcello? Want to join me after all? *(pause)*

49. INT. HOTEL ROOM

Kate is on the phone:

KATE
Sarah, did you check out flights? *(pause)* Thought so. Lots of special last minute offers, eh. OK, I'll book us into the Hotel Calcina. And I'll meet your flight on Monday. *(long pause)* Yes, but I really don't know what to do. It's not my job to turn them in. Have they even committed a crime? But I may be missing out on a good scoop— I'm going to have to think about this.

50. ON THE LAGOON FERRY

Dave and Kate are standing at the rail as the waters swish by.

DAVE
So, isn't it time you told me a bit more about yourself, Kate? You mentioned you were from Liverpool, brought up a good Catholic, you said, and you did some degree in Image Studies, was it? And you're a freelance journalist, yes? But that's about all I know—

KATE *(hesitates)*
Well, there are a few more things you should know —

DAVE *(continues)*
—for a start, how come you got into all this Situationist business? Not everybody's cup of tea, is it?

KATE *(slight shrug)*
Ah, that's easy. I'm named after my great-grandmother, who was Russian. Yekaterina. I never knew her—she died before I was born. But when I was doing the usual rebellion teen thing against my family, who were pretty straight-laced conservatives, even Latin Mass Society Catholics and all that *(he looks blank)*—well, I knew vaguely that she'd been swept up in the after-math of the Russian Revolution and had known all sorts of interesting people. She had been a great friend of Elsa Triolet *(he again looks blank)* — and so I ended up doing my PhD on her.

DAVE
On your great grandmother? Isn't that unusual?

KATE *(laughs)*
No. On Elsa Triolet —

DAVE
Oh. *(pause)* Who?

KATE *(getting enthusiastic)*
Elsa was born Ella Kagan, in Moscow, in 1896. In 1915 she brought the young poet Mayakovsky home to meet the family—and he promptly fell in love with her older sister, Lily, who was then marrried to Osip Brik — but the Briks believed in an open marriage, so that trio became a *ménage à trois* for several years, as well as founding *LEF,* the revolutionary critical journal —but Ella,

left in the cold, went off and married a French cavalry officer instead and moved to France. Hence the name Triolet. But then Viktor Shklovsky fell in love with her—and she allowed him to write daily letters to her —provided he didn't mention love in them. So that's how he wrote his great novel, *Zoo: Or Letters not about Love.*
My absolutely favourite novel. Any rate, Ella, now Elsa, divorced the French officer and married Louis Aragon, the ex-Dadaist and Surrealist poet. It was Elsa who recruited him into the Communist Party. During the Nazi Occupation they ran a Resistance cell, and then after the war she wrote political novels —she was the first woman to get the Prix Goncourt —while Louis —

DAVE
Hang on, hang on. I haven't a clue who all these people are!

KATE *(snorts)*
Ah. Of course. That's part of the problem these days. You can quote Ezra Pound —

DAVE *(grins)*
Well, only that bit, to be honest—

KATE
— and you know about Renaissance art, and Tintoretto, and where to get a decent lunch in Venice— but like most people you've utterly forgotten the great heroic periods of modern art, of modernist art, that extraordinary interweaving of art and politics in the 1920s,

1930s, and into the 1960s —which is when the original Situationists flourished. 'Art' now means either hushed art galleries or publicity stunts — did you see the skull as we came along the Grand Canal that first night?

DAVE
What skull?

KATE
Yes. Brilliant in its futile way. Outside one of the palazzi, somebody had constructed a ten-foot-high human skull—made out of crushed tin cans —a piss-take on the most expensive art work on the market this century, Damien Hirst's diamond studded skull—by the biggest earning artist ever. God help us! Any rate —

Dave's mobile phone rings and he answers it. Listens for a while.

DAVE
That was Fabrizio. Ringing to apologize. To you. He checked with the newspapers, and they had all received an original of the warning letter. Not the photocopy he had given us. Which is a relief. But he says that there are armed police and soldiers all around the San Marco Square. Even anti-aircraft gun emplacements. Any tourists still left are freaking out. But nothing's actually happened. Yet.

51. INSIDE BALCONY OF BELFRY OF CHURCH OF S. BARNABA.

Close-up of two hands holding a control panel with a small joystick.

52. INSIDE BALCONY OF BELFRY OF CHURCH OF S. GIORGIO MAGGIORE.

Close-up of two hands holding a control panel with a small joystick.

53. INSIDE BALCONY OF BELFRY OF CHURCH OF S. STEFANO

Close-up of two hands holding a control panel with a small joystick.Hand turns to show wrist-watch. It is a few minutes before noon.

54. EXT. LANDING STAGE AT TORCELLO.

Kate and Dave disembark. They begin walking along the path towards the cathedral.

55. EXT. HIGH AERIAL SHOT ABOVE THE GRAND CANAL.

Three small-scale model aircraft are flying in a V formation along the line of the Grand Canal, high enough easily to clear the roofs of all the buildings.

Camera tracks them as they fly round the great bend, then high over the Ponte dell'Accademia, and then past Santa Maria della Salute.

56. INSIDE BALCONY OF BELFRY OF S. GIORGIO MAGGIORE.

Viewpoint from above the hand-held wireless control box, as a hand manipulates the joystick and operates a set of three switches.

57. EXT. HIGH AERIAL SHOT ABOVE S. MARCO BASIN

Two of the model aircraft curve towards the campanile, while the third starts to nose-dive towards Harry's Bar on the waterfront.

Sudden bursts of anti-aircraft fire leave smoke-balls near the model aircraft. Tracer bullets whine past them. The model aircraft duck and weave.
No aircraft are hit.

As the two targetted at the campanile approach nearer over the waters in front of the S. Marco vaporetto landing stages, they suddenly explode and fall into the water.

The third plane dives lower and picks up speed.
A trap opens in its fuselage and out flutter scores of pieces of paper which flutter onto the pavement of the Sestiere and the garden behind.

The plane then crashes into the wall of Harry's Bar.

58. INT. INSIDE HARRY'S BAR.

The bar is packed. The American tourist, Big Al, is about to drink a very large Bellini, the house champagne and peach drink.

As the last model plane loudly hits the roof,
Big Al splutters on his drink and spills it all down his floral T-shirt.

BIG AL
Jesus wept! My Bellini!

59. EXT. OUTSIDE TORCELLO CATHEDRAL. BRIGHT SUNSHINE.

Dave and Kate are standing watching a noisy and very lively local wedding party being endlessly photographed by both several official and dozens of amateur photographers in the area outside the cathedral doorway.

KATE
Well, Dave, there is one other thing I have to tell you, a little late perhaps —

60. INT. TORCELLO CATHEDRAL.

Dave and Kate are standing looking at the 12th-century wall-high mosaic of the Last Judgement on the west end wall.

The camera slowly pans across the mosaic, coming to rest on the Lake of Fire—the souls in Hell.

DAVE *(quietly)*
You know, there wasn't much you could teach the church in the middle ages about the power of terror.

61. EXT. OUTSIDE SMALL CAFÉ ON PATH FROM TORCELLO CATHEDRAL.

Dave and Kate are sitting at one of the small tables, with a snack and a drink.

DAVE
Thanks, anyway, for telling me. *(pause)* Have you any more surprises?

KATE
Well, I do. But I'm not sure I should share it. *(pause)* Unless you absolutely promise not to tell Fabrizio, or anyone else.

DAVE
I suspect I know what it might be. *(pause)* In which case, yes, I promise.

KATE
I'm pretty sure who the Venice Situationists are. But I don't want to give them away. I think I'm on their side.

DAVE *(laughs)*
A lot of people will be. All those tourists who have ever been to Venice and wished all the other tourists hadn't! Say no more. I don't want to know. Let's just get back and see what they've been up to today.

62. EXT. S. MARCO VAPORETTO STATION.

Dave and Kate disembark. Dave offers a handshake.

DAVE
I'll say goodbye here, I think, Kate.
It's been enjoyable, while it lasted.

KATE
(she declines to take his hand)
Are you sure, Dave? You've forgotten?
You did promise to take me to Mass
tomorrow. You're not going to let a girl down
on an offer like that, now are you?

DAVE *(laughs)*
I hadn't forgotten! Yes, of course. I thought
you would think I was just pestering you.

KATE
No. I think it's possible to be just friends—

DAVE
Fine. No problem. OK, then. I'll meet you at
the *side* door to the basilica at 8.45 prompt.
Wear a veil or something of the kind.
Black is best!

63. EXT. AT SIDE DOOR OF SAN MARCO BASILICA.

WRITTEN:] Day Six: Sunday

Dave is waiting, in a suit and tie, looking anxiously at his watch. Kate arrives in a hurry, carrying several international newspapers.

KATE

Didn't know if you'd seen these. I just pinched them from the lobby of the Calcina! It's front page on most of them.

Kate shows him the New York Times Global Edition, International Herald Tribune, Observer International — headlines include 'Terrorist Threat to Venice', 'Venice Under Attack', etc.

DAVE

We're going to have to go in — they'll be closing the doors soon. I didn't check the news on-line this morning. What's the gist?

KATE

They've all received a second threatening letter — and it has a set of demands—

They have reached the side door, guarded by unfriendly gatekeepers.

DAVE

Put your veil on, Kate. *(she does so)* Messa domenica, per favore, messa della domenica *(to gatekeepers, who suspiciously wave them through).*

64. INT. INSIDE S. MARCO BASILICA.

Dave and Kate enter the basilica and follow the crowd round to the nave. They find seats near the front of the central area of the nave. Kate looks round and up above her in genuine amazement at the mosaics glittering in the lights and the candles lit for High Mass.

DAVE *(whispers)*
Right, what are the new threats — and the new demands?

KATE
(rustling through the newspapers)
They're basically threatening germ warfare. Chemical and bacteriological attack. Plague and infections. They say they will release poisonous gases — causing food poisoning, diarrhoea, fevers —

DAVE
They shouldn't have any problem doing that in Venice! Just the under-cooked fish does it quite well already.

The mainly Italian women in the seats behind and around them start to hush them, telling them to be quiet, that they're in a church, and shouldn't be reading newspapers in church —but some of them are also listening to what Kate is saying.
And passing it on to others.

DAVE *(whispering)*
So what are their demands?
Have they made any?

KATE *(rustles through the papers)*
There's a list. They want those huge adverts banned, and plastic bottles banned, there are 190 million of them every year, they claim—and they want more drinking fountains, and more public toilets—they want cruise ships banned from the San Marco basin—more

gardens and kids' facilities, more schools in Venice itself—a massive tax on empty and under-occupied properties—more ambulance motor boats to ferry the disabled—no cars on the Guidecca —

The procession for the start of High Mass has now begun, and Kate is very firmly shushed by those around them.

KATE
(continues, whispering very quietly)
And all this to be agreed and guaranteed before the Papal visit to Venice next month, or else —

DAVE *(whispers back)*
OK, we'd better shut up, or we'll get lynched. Nothing we can do about it now anyway. Just enjoy the music and the spectacle.

KATE *(whispers, and grins)*
Remember, I was once a Catholic —but I admit this is nothing like my grotty parish church back home! The mosaics are fabulous!

They finally fall silent, to the continued tutting and shaking of heads of the worshippers around them.

The Mass proceeds with splendid ceremony and awesome choir music.

65. INT. S. MARCO BASILICA.

Several cross-fades to indicate slow passing of time as the sung Mass proceeds. Until:

As a normal part of the continuing ceremony, the clergy gather in the centre of the sanctuary. An altar boy comes forward with the incense bowl for the thurible to be filled. A sacristan holds out the incense bowl towards a priest, who takes a spoonful of incense and puts it onto the burning charcoal in the thurible. He adds another spoonful and closes the thurible. Then he goes towards the congregation and swings the thurible towards them to bless them.

As he does so, thick green smoke comes slowly out of the thurible and begins to fill the sanctuary. The priest starts coughing and others quickly follow suit —one of the younger altar boys starts to choke and falls to the floor—then another—and panic sets in.

The clergy struggle to escape the fumes. The priest drops the smoking thurible which continues to spew out green fumes.

The front rows of the congregation start to panic. With a great clattering of chairs, the entire alarmed congregation begins to clear the nave and side aisles, crowding towards the exits.

DAVE *(to himself)*
Incensato! Bingo!

He realises Kate is no longer sitting next to him, and spots her going towards the side of the sanctuary. He follows her and pushes through the panicking crowd just in time to reach her as she speaks across the altar rails to an older altar boy who is shepherding people out of the sanctuary.

KATE
Marcello Rossellini!

The altar boy, who is about sixteen, looks startled but then acknowledges her.

KATE *(smiles at him)*
Si tu es Marcellus? Vel *si tu* es amicus scriptoris Guido Debord, et *si tu* volas , bibete postea cum nobis? coffea arabica — ?

MARCELLO *(quickly but cautiously)*
Si tu ? Si tu ? —Vero. Sed si tu non es guardia, quare mihi dicisti?

KATE
Etiam legi librum admirabile et laudabile : Societatis Spectaculorum.

MARCELLO *(hesitates)*
Comprehendo. Casa Floriana, hoc vespere, ad horam octodecimam.

Kate and Dave are swept out with the rest of the crowd.

66. EXT. PIAZZA S. MARCO.

Crowds are milling about, the exiting congregation battling with the baffled tourists waiting to get in. As word of the 'poison gas' spreads, people begin to leave the piazza hurriedly.

Dave and Kate retreat towards the centre of the piazza.

DAVE
So what was going on there, Kate?

KATE
My Latin's a bit rusty, but I just made a date with a Situationist.

DAVE
Didn't think he was your type.

KATE
Don't be jealous. We're meeting him for coffee at Florian's at six this evening. OK? So, if you'll treat me to a coffee now, I'll explain.

67. EXT. OUTSIDE QUADRI COFFEE HOUSE. IN SAN MARCO SQUARE.

Kate and Dave are seated at a pavement table, with expensive coffees.

DAVE
Good job you're still a temporary consultant to Lloyd's. They're paying for this. Not sure I could afford this place *and* Florian's in one day. Now, earn your hideously expensive coffee.

KATE *(sips coffee)*
But very *good* coffee. Ah, this is the life.

DAVE
Spill the beans! Who was that?

KATE
Marcello Rossellini. He's the son of the trade unionist official who was arrested. He was at the match with his father, which is why I recognised him. But I already knew who he was.

DAVE
And that is —?

KATE
A few years ago, he set up a sting operation on a paedophile priest. He was then a junior altar boy in one of the Venice churches, but not in the Basilica itself. And the altar boys got together to catch this guy. Even had a film of him, almost *in flagrante delicto.* Or do I mean *flagrante dilecto?* Any rate, despite the clear evidence, the whole thing was hushed up. But I did write a news piece on it, which was never published. I remembered it partly because it just seemed so right that a boy named Rossellini should make a film of the actual crime!

DAVE
So is he the only Situationist?
All this, just one teenager?

KATE
No, no. But that's one of the things I want to ask him about. All the kids involved in the original sting will have grown up by now, but I suspect they still know each other, and they probably have younger brothers— this was a team effort, I'm sure. I doubt if he'll

tell us the details, but I do want to know how he came across the Situationists, and a few other things like that. I'm still trying to write that article, but I can leave out anything that would actually give him away.

DAVE
So we meet him this evening, and Lloyd's will pick up the bill at Florian's. But in my report I can't use anything you've found out?
And I can't tell Fabrizio, obviously.

KATE
You can write your report saying you have it on good authority that it was a situationist intervention. But Lloyd's don't actually have to pay out any insurance, do they? They haven't actually damaged anything.
Well, not much.

DAVE
I suppose not. So *(melodramatically)* my task here is done. I shall, sadly, leave Venice. Back to work tomorrow. *(pause)* In that case, I shall go and see my beloved Tintorettos this afternoon. There are lots more of them.
I can't tempt you?

KATE *(smiles)*
No way, Dave — In any case, I have to move out of my little albergo. Move next door, into the Calcina, finally.

DAVE
When does Sarah arrive?

KATE
Tomorrow. Flight 8566. Been a long week, in its way.

DAVE
Right, see you at Florian's. At six.

68. EXT. PAVEMENT TABLES IN AREA OUTSIDE FLORIAN'S.

The tuxedo orchestra is playing schmaltz music. Early evening light.

Kate, Dave and Marcello are seated at a table, with cakes, coffee, spritzers.

MARCELLO
(reasonable but hesitant English)
— so we will all find ourselves with no jobs worth having, serving the tourists, most of us not able to live here, going back to Mestre dog-tired every night, and watching our beautiful city slowly become more and more —how do you say—commercializzate—they want to build a metro, for the tourists, they want cars, they want night clubs 24 hours a day, they want adverts along the Grand Canal —so we do not want *them*—we will frighten them away!

KATE
You were the oldest? Weren't there any adults involved at all? Not even your father?

MARCELLO *(smiles)*
Papà! No, no. He is sindacalista. The old ways.

DAVE
Then how did you pay for all this? The rubber dinghy? The radio-controlled planes? The website?

KATE *(smiles to Marcello)*
He's in insurance! Always the bottom line!

MARCELLO
The Vatican paid us off. When we demanded to take that priest to the court. We used that money. To buy giocattoli—toys —a boat, aeromodelli. We used children's things—catapulta, firecrackers, candelotto fumogeno, puzza bomba —

Fabrizio has come behind them, quietly, and has been listening.

FABRIZIO *(he sits at the table)*
—a smoke bomb, and a stink bomb—
Hello, Dave. Evening, Kate. Ciao Marcello. Do I get a coffee, then?

DAVE *(startled)*
Well, yes. Erm — *(he signals to the waiter)*

FABRIZIO
It's so nice that I am not investigating any crimes at the moment. I am free of all duties, and I can just relax and have a coffee with my friends. At Florian's indeed!

KATE *(wary)*
How did you, er —?

FABRIZIO *(enjoying this)*
I am a great admirer of your English detective writer, G. K. Chesterton. His Father Brown is very good. Do you remember the story in which nobody saw who had done the crime? Because nobody sees a person whom everybody takes for granted? The postman, for example.

The waiter comes with coffee and Fabrizio slowly sips it. They wait for him.

FABRIZIO
It was the Frari that gave it away. Who is taken for granted in a church? Who is never seen or looked at — except perhaps for the wrong reasons. The altar boys. It had to be the altar boys who did the tricks in the Frari, the Donatello, the Sansovino. *(another sip)* And now this new letter. Threatening all sorts of horrors before the Pope's visit next month —but that papal visit is not yet announced, officially. Though the boys in the San Marco choir have already been rehearsing for it, have they not Marcello? *(another slow sip)* After that, it was very elementary, my dear David. And now —

DAVE
Fabrizio, you can't. You have no proof. And we won't help, will we Kate? As far as Lloyd's are concerned, there is only some minor damage to those damn adverts—

we'll fork out for them. But we'll make it a condition that they are removed from the buildings—and it's not a crime to blow up your own model aeroplanes—and—

FABRIZIO
— well, there are certainly six public toilets to be considered. *(pause)* Though they were in pretty bad condition. They needed replacing, I suppose. And then there's the violation of the maritime regulations, which we have to take most seriously, of course —*Potenza lascia il posto a vela regola* — and then — but most luckily, none of these crimes are in my department. No, there is just one small matter that puzzles me in all this. I merely wanted to ask Marcello a question, as one Venetian to another . I am a true Venetian, after all, David and Kate.

MARCELLO *(suspiciously)*
You have not said who you are.
Though I can guess. What is your question?

FABRIZIO
Thank you, Marcello. *(pause)* Now, it seems that you met Kate here at the football match, when you went with your father. So my only question, Marcello, as one true Venetian to another, is: why on earth do you go and watch Venezia! They're terrible!

They all burst out laughing. Fabrizio signals the waiter.

FABRIZIO
I think we need something more festive!
I might even put it on the police bill.

The tuxedo band begins a new round of tunes,
a lively waltz first.

DAVE
On that note, I think we celebrate.
May I, Ms. Katrina, ask you for a dance?

KATE
But —

Dave takes Kate by the hand and leads her into the space just beyond the tables.
They begin to waltz.

Gradually, other couples join them.
The band responds and plays more loudly.

More couples join, including from outside the Caffè Qaudri on the other side of the square.

And the band from Quadri also now joins in with the same waltz.

The camera slowly moves up and back and high until we see the whole piazza from above,
and it is full of swirling couples.

Hold until:

69. EXT. IN THE ALILAGUNA BOAT GOING TO THE AIRPORT.

WRITTEN:] Day Seven: Monday.

Kate and Dave are seated, with Dave's case near them.

DAVE
Well, back to the insurance business. Could be worse. At least I get to visit Venice every so often.

KATE
Thank you for introducing me to it.

DAVE
Not it. Her. *La serenissima.* I hope Sarah likes her.

KATE
I asked— and she likes Tintoretto too.

Dave laughs.

70. EXT. IN THE ALILAGUNA BOAT COMING FROM THE AIRPORT.

Kate and Sarah are standing in the open part of the boat, looking at a wonderful sunset as they approach Venice —

FADE OUT .

THE END

Dave and Kate arrive in Venice as strangers,
for very different reasons, until a sequence
of bizarre events bring them uneasily together.
But are they confronting blackmail, terrorism,
radical politics, or just some silly pranks?
And is the whole marvellous city in peril,
or is it just a matter of who, crucially,
is responsible for the few public toilets
and those appalling adverts spoiling
the great facades of beautiful Venice?

Film-texts are in the format of a film-script,
but are not designed for actual film production.
They are intended to be read and imagined,
and play with a variety of familiar film genres,
including romantic comedy, political thriller,
and tourist guide: a kind of fantasy travel souvenir.
Other film-texts are set in Budapest, Prague,
Rome, Athens, and fourth-century Egypt.

New Crisis Quarterly revives the title
of a short-lived periodical which
published only reviews of wholly
imaginary works, which their authors
did not have the time to write.
NCQ books are offered in the same spirit.